

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GSD

TAGS: UR, PFOR

SUBJECT: POLITICAL ANALYSIS: GROMYKO ELECTIONEERING:
DIPLOMATIC BALANCING ACT

PASS FOLLOWING VIA THE NATO-WIDE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

RR RFWFA RFWFB RFWFD RFWFE RFWF F RFWFG RFWFH RFWFI

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FM WASHINGTON

TO AIG 6006

AIG 6007

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NATO CONFIDENTIAL FROM WASHINGTON

1. GROMYKO NOT SURPRISINGLY CONCENTRATED ON FOREIGN
AFFAIRS IN HIS JUNE 10 ELECTION SPEECH, TREATING HIS
MINSK CONSTITUENTS TO A TOUR D'HORIZON OF SOVIET FOREIGN
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POLICY ON THE EVE OF THE THIRD US-USSR SUMMIT. A FULL
TEXT OF THE SPEECH IS NOT YET AVAILABLE, AND THE AVAIL-

ABLE SUMMARIES DIFFER IN SOME RESPECTS. NEVERTHELESS, THEY SHOW THE FOREIGN MINISTER AS HEWING BY AND LARGE

TO POLICY LINES SET SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR, EVEN THOUGH HIS PERSONAL TOUCH IS MUCH IN EVIDENCE IN THE TREATMENT OF SPECIFIC ISSUES. (HE REPORTEDLY TAKES PRIDE IN PREPARING FINAL VERSIONS OF MAJOR SPEECHES HIMSELF.)

2. DETENTE: GROMYKO'S PERSONAL INPUT IS MOST EVIDENT IN HIS SKEPTICAL BUT BALANCED ENDORSEMENT OF DETENTE. HE WARNED THAT "STUBBORN AND PROLONGED STRUGGLE LIES AHEAD" IF THE TURN OF DETENTE IS TO BE MADE IRREVERSIBLE. AT THE SAME TIME, HE REASSURED HIS AUDIENCE THAT "THE COURSE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS HAS DEFINITELY TURNED TOWARD PEACE AND NOT TOWARD WAR."

3. IN ANY EVENT, HE CREDITED THE SOVIET REGIME WITH HAVING ENSURED THAT "NOT ONE MORE OR LESS IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM CAN NOW BE SOLVED WITHOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE SOVIET UNION; AND IT CERTAINLY CANNOT BE SOLVED TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE SOVIET UNION'S INTERESTS." (THIS FORMULATION SEEMS A SHADE MORE GUARDED THAN THE ONE GROMYKO USED BEFORE THE 24TH CONGRESS IN 1971: "THERE IS NOT A SINGLE QUESTION OF ANY IMPORTANCE WHICH COULD AT PRESENT BE SOLVED WITHOUT THE SOVIET UNION OR AGAINST ITS WILL.")

4. US-SOVIET RELATIONS: GROMYKO SIMILARLY GAVE US-

SOVIET RELATIONS A DELIBERATELY POSITIVE ASSESSMENT, BUT HE BALANCED THE POSITIVE WITH RESERVATIONS JUST AS DELIBERATE. "IT IS TOO EARLY TO SAY THAT THE UNITED STATES' TURN TO A DEEPENING OF RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION IS COMPLETE. ONE CANNOT RULE OUT THE ZIGZAG PATH." HE PORTRAYED THE OPPONENTS OF DETENTE IN THE US AS STILL ACTIVE, BUT WAS CONFIDENT THAT "IT WILL NOT BE EASY FOR THEM TO REVERSE THE COURSE OF EVENTS." AT THE SAME TIME, HE PROMISED THAT THE USSR WOULD DO ITS UTMOST
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TO GIVE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH THE US "AN INCREASINGLY STABLE CHARACTER." AND, HE ADDED, "WE ARE PREPARING SERIOUSLY FOR THIS NEW SUMMIT MEETING. IT WILL BE NO LESS SIGNIFICANT THAN THE PREVIOUS ONES." YET, IF THE AVAILABLE SUMMARIES ARE ACCURATE, HE JUSTIFIED AN IMPROVED RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF "PROBLEMS OF WAR AND PEACE...ABOVE ALL THE AGREEMENT ON THE PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR," A

STANCE CONSISTENT WITH SOME OF HIS EARLIER PRONOUNCEMENTS

ON THE SUBJECT.

5. CHINA: GROMYKO'S RITUAL DENUNCIATION OF THE MAO REGIME IN CHINA WAS BRIEF BUT HARSH, AND HIGHLIGHTED BY A RINGING REJECTION OF THE "THOUGHT-UP MAO THESIS ON THE INEVITABILITY OF WAR IN EACH GENERATION." BUT AGAIN HE BALANCED POLEMICS WITH A REAFFIRMATION OF THE USSR'S INTEREST IN A NORMALIZATION OF STATE RELATIONS WITH CHINA "IN THE INTERESTS OF WORLD SOCIALISM." OTHERWISE, HIS ONLY OTHER NOTEWORTHY ASIAN REFERENCE CONCERNED THE USSR'S ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY PROPOSAL, WHICH HE CLAIMED WAS "GAINING IN FORM," PERHAPS AN ILLUSION TO THE AFGHAN ENDORSEMENT OF THAT PROPOSAL THE PREVIOUS DAY.

6. EUROPE: AS FOR EUROPE, THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER CITED FRANCE AND THE FRG AS POSITIVE EXAMPLES OF DEVELOPING COOPERATION, AND FORECAST IMPROVEMENTS IN SOVIET TIES WITH HALF A DOZEN OTHER CONTINENTAL COUNTRIES; FINLAND WAS SINGLED OUT FOR "A HIGH LEVEL OF GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS." HE REPEATED THE USUAL CALL FOR A SUMMIT-LEVEL CSCE IN THE NEAR FUTURE, ACCORDING TO TASS'S ENGLISH VERSION OF THE SPEECH AND THE PRAVDA SUMMARY. THE RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE DOMESTIC SERVICE APPARENTLY DIFFERS, CITING HIM AS SPEAKING OF A EUROPEAN CONFERENCE "IN THE NEAR FUTURE ON A HIGH LEVEL."

7. MIDDLE EAST: THE MIDDLE EAST PASSAGE WAS SIGNIFICANT PRIMARILY FOR THE BLAND CLAIM THAT "WELL-KNOWN PRACTICAL STEPS" RECENTLY TAKEN TO EASE TENSION IN THE AREA WERE "LARGELY DUE" TO THE SOVIET UNION. BEYOND
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THAT, GROMYKO MERELY REITERATED THAT DISENGAGEMENT MUST BE ONLY THE FIRST STEP TOWARD A COMPLETE PEACE SETTLEMENT, THAT "STOPPING AT HALF-WAY MEASURES" SUCH AS "ISRAEL AND ITS BACKERS" (READ US) FAVORED COULD NOT BE ALLOWED, THAT ISRAEL MUST WITHDRAW FROM ARAB LANDS AND PALESTINIAN RIGHTS MUST BE SECURED.

8. BREZHNEV'S ROLE: GROMYKO PAID EFFUSIVE TRIBUTE TO BREZHNEV FOR "INDEFATIGABLE WORK ON THE FOREIGN POLICY FRONT," FOR "MAKING TREMENDOUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ELABORATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF LENINIST FOREIGN POLICY, TO THE ELABORATION ABOVE ALL OF ITS MOST FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS, IN DETERMINING THE MAIN DIRECTION OF

OUR COUNTRY'S FOREIGN POLICY ACTIVITY." THE EFFUSIVENESS CONTRASTS MARKEDLY WITH GROMYKO'S NORMALLY RESTRAINED MANNER. KISSINGER

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